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A
COMPLAINT
TO THE
House of Commons,

AND
Resolution taken up by the free Pro-
testant Subjects of the Cities of *London* and
Westminster, and the Counties adjacent.



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A Complaint to the House of *Commons*, and Resolution taken up by the free Protestant Subjects of the Cities of *London* and *Westminster*, and the Counties adjacent.



Others may speak by authority of a Proverb, and then we are sure we ought not to be silenced, we have seen and perused many Remonstrances, Declarations, Votes and Ordinances, and our Vote upon them all is, That it had been happy for us, more advantageous to our Religion, and more honourable to our Nation, if they had been strangled in the birth, and never walked abroad in the light, and that it will never be well with us, or the Kingdom, till they be buried in oblivion: for we finde so much bitterneffe and asperity in some, so many jealousies and fears raised in others, so little truth in many, and so much danger in them all, that we may justly fear some Conjurers have been abroad to raise evill spirits, and that we shall never be at quiet, till they be under ground. We have lived to see many changes in Church and State, as make our hearts ake, because for the most part they are still for the worst, and when we could not beleieve a degree beyond our miseries, and thereupon built hopes of amendment, our sense of suffering taught us new degrees of comparison: we will instance in a few, and by them ghesse at the rest (for we like not generalls, no more then letters testimoniall of credit without a name to own them.) It is granted of all hands we are free Subjects, born to the Laws of the Kingdom as our birth-right, which we may challenge of right, and that we maintain the Protestant Religion against Popery, and all other Sects and Heresie, and that the Litur-

gie of the Church is established by Act of Parliament. We beseech you now consider how we were used in all these; Our estates were taken away under the gentle termes of Benevolences and Loans, where the choice was, either to part with our Estates and Land, or lye in Prison: When we found this pressure, we ran to the Law for protection, and found by wofull experience that innocence was a worse crime then felony; for he that was committed for felony was admitted to baile, whilst he that was committed for no cause was upon his *Habeas Corpus* remanded and continued in Prison: Thus it fared with us in our Liberties, and not much better in our Property, for what with charge of Arms and Musters (where the Lord Lieutenants, or Deputy Lieutenants spleen or will made a Law) and billeting Souldiers and the like, what we enjoyed was at the will of others rather then our own; and beleve it our lives were in no small hazard, when Martiall Law was so freely talked of: These were no small losses to make men speak; but we silently suffered, and not long after came our Petition of Right, which re-invested us in our legall inheritance again, and as we thought had settled us in that happinesse which was immovable; but experience soon taught us the contrary, for a way was found out to create offences by Proclamation, and a Court that could make any thing an offence at their pleasure, and punish it how they list, where great Lords could more easily impose five or 10000. l. fine for a new made offence, then pay the tenth part of such a summe for their own just Debts; And to make their sentences more severe, could finde out new Prisons, and close imprisonment to separate the distressed from their friends, yea and whip men too, and inflict other corporall punishment, which is not pleasing to us in the remembrance: Nay, it was grown to such a height of naughtinesse, that the base Projectors and Monopolizers (the bane of the Common-wealth) made use of that Court of Justice (if so we may call it) to uphold their villa-

ny (let that stinking Sope-Project witnesse whether we speak truth or not.) And as if we could not have been undone soon enough, we had a Master Project invented, to submit all our estates to the Kings pleasure by a new devised Ship-writ, whereby the King might make a necessity at pleasure, and then impose what he thought fit, which after it had been hatched & contrived by some over learned wicked brains, was countenanced under a pretext of Law by the Judges, (in mentioning of which we intend not either *Walter*, *Hutton*, or *Crook*, who are dead, or *Crew*, who is yet living, for their memories are precious with us for honest men) and this was prosecuted with no small violence (as many other projects besides) by the Kings Counsell at Law, who may blush for shame, or at least quake for fear, to think how they mis-led a good King and their gracious Master, to the grievance of his best Subjects. It afflicts us to think of the pressures we underwent by new Imposts, & that involuntary dangerous president of exercise of 40.s. *per Tonne* upon wine, besides divers other grievances: And yet all these past currant under the specious and plausible pretence of the Subjects good, (which Mr. *Attorney Generall* found, and so exprest it in his Study) but we found the quite contrary in experience. And as our troubles were thus multiplied in the Common-wealth, so did they no lesse encrease in the Church; we had new devices leading fast on towards Popery. It began under the fair pretence of orderly service of God by railing in the Communion Table, providing Church ornaments, and the like, (which we are so farre from condemning, that we should have had cause to thank them if they had stayed there) for we wel approve of harmlesse and inoffensive Ceremonies, and decent form of Gods worship and Service) but what with their new Christning our Communion-Tables to make them Altars, setting them Altar-wise at the upper end of the Chancell, advancing them upon steps, in some places changing them from wood to stone, setting up Crucifixes, & then bowing and cringing, and the bold Sermons

for auricular confessions, free will, merit, reall presence in the Papistlicall sense, and such other stufte; we could not well tell where they would rest untill they had brought in the Idoll of the Masse, Image-worship, and the like, and made the Archbishop of *Canterbury* equall to a Pope in *England*, who to our grief had obtained that command in Church and State, and that power at Counsell Board, Star-chamber, and High-Commission, (besides his under hand-awing the Common Law Judges to betray the Law to his will) that he Lorded it all the Kingdom over, and by the assistance of some of his under Bishops (as bad as himself) and others more easie to be wrought upon, he brought the Clergy (some few godly Ministers excepted) (who then by way of disgrace were termed Puritans, and now Popishly affected Malignants) to be at his Command, who preached (or rather prated) nothing but blinde obedience, and the Kings Prerogative, and such things as they understood not, to make us odious to our Prince, and raise themselves to preferment (which was too ready a way in those times to accomplish their desires.) We would not be mistaken, as if we did inveigh against Archbishops, or Bishops, or bore ill will to the Clergy in generall, we like well of their dignities and orders, and there are many among them, who by their pious preaching, gracious lives, godly examples, and orderly Government in the Church, have been great instruments of our good, and by their depth of knowledge and learning, stopt the mouths of Papists, Schismatiques, and Heretiques; we pray for them, and that God would encrease the number of them, and if it had not been thought otherwise fit by the State, we should never have denied the Bishops a place in the Lords House in Parliament, and hope they shall yet continue to have a name and fit power of Government in the Church, though their Votes in Parliament be gone, (which for the manner of carriage in taking them away (if all be true that we heare) was not so well as we could have wished for the honour of that Great Court which we shall labour to uphold)

uphold.) By this time we presume you will think we may speak to the purpose, for our losses were not small; if the losse of Property, Liberty, Life, or Religion be great. But you will object, These were not lost, onely in hazard, and that all these are now put out of danger, by abolishing Ship-money, and all other things of that nature, and by other good Bills passed this Parliament, and a Bill ready to be passed for a Synod, if the King will give His assent. To which we answer, and acknowledge the goodnesse of the King, that he did not extend His Power in the case of Ship-money to that latitude, when time was (as our Judges put into His Power) and when He was advised by His Great Counsell it was against Law, He yeelded to abolish it. We confesse His Grace to us in the Bill for the Trienniall Parliament, and in regulating his Counsell-Table, and putting down His Court of Star-chamber, and High Commission and other good and profitable Laws, consented to by Him, and made for us this Parliament, and we blesse God we have such a King, and pray heartily for His long life, and happy Reign over us, and publish to all the World, that we do from our hearts acquit Him from the guilt of all our sufferings, and a thought in any of us of his inclination to Popery, and wish that those who are in Authority under Him would learn goodnesse by His example, and that the whole Kingdom were as sound in the Protestant Religion: But yet withall, we must let Him and all the World know too, that our condition at present is so far from being bettered, that it is grown extreemly worse, as if all the evils of former times had been epitomized into the Volume of a yeer last past, or thereabouts, and the quintessence of ours and the former Ages grievances extracted and given us at one draught: It is true we had a Parliament called before this, on which our hopes depended much for redresse of our evils, and how unhappily it ended we too sensibly feelee. Whether he that is dead, or the late Comptroller that is living (and would have set that unvendible commodity of Ship-money to sale in that

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Parliament for 12. Subsidies) were the cause of it, we judge not, nor condemn any. And it is as true this Parliament, to our thinking, was called seasonably for our relief; and the unhappy differences arisen in *Scotland*, almost miraculously quieted, and our Brethren of that Nation returned home peaceably (though we must not forget that it cost us 300000. l. besides the many thousands weekly their Army and ours had for their support here, which we could wish had been spared.) And we ought likewise to acknowledge (for it is a truth not to be denied) the care both Houses of Parliament have taken for suppressing Popery, discountenancing Ministers Popishly affected, and the many expressions they have made for maintaining our Protestant Religion and Laws; But for all this, we have now more cause to complain then ever. At the beginning of this Parliament they removed one highly charged for endeavouring the subversion of the Fundamentall Laws of the Land, and many other Treasons, which how far guilty we determine not, because we heard no evidence, and though we are sure he was a great cause of our sufferings, yet we could wish his Attainder might have been in such manner, as others taking notice of his punishment, might have feared to commit the like crimes, and not so to punish, as to need a Declaration, that his manner of punishment should not be drawn into example afterwards, (the ready way to draw a suspicion upon the Justice of his sentence) but if our Fundamentall Laws be all subverted, what doth his punishment advantage us? The Houses likewise took care for committing the Archbishop of *Canterbury* to the Tower, Judge *Bartly* to the Sheriffes of *London*, Sir *George Ratcliffe* to the Gatehouse, and all these for no lesse crimes then High Treason; but we are ashamed to think that they should lye in Prison above two yeers together without a legall triall, (which will be a fair justification of all our Judges of inferior Courts for delay of Justice, and no small injury to the free Subjects of *England* in the president to be deprived of
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their Liberty so long upon a bare surmise) nay we heare (but will give no present credit to it for the honour of both Houses) that one of the Judges of the Kings Bench is kept Prisoner in the Tower for no cause at all exprest, (or any just one that we can learn;) and Judge *Bastly* that lies under the impeachment of High Treason, appointed by both Houses, to sit Judge again in that Court, which if it be true, we must plainly tell you, that we fear the Impeachment against him (as well as against half a dozen more of his brothers, that never proceeded further then an Accusation) was rather to awe them, and make them serve turns upon occasion, (keeping them under the lash) then out of zeale of Justice, or for the common good.

Nay, we have good advertisement, (for we are not so well acquainted in the Prisons, as to know by sight) of many hundreds committed by both Houses this Parliament (where by the way we should be glad to know how the House of Commons, being onely part of the Body of the Great Counsell, and no Court of Record, have got a power to commit such as are none of their Members) (for wise men and good Lawyers question it) we say many hundred committed; and not one convicted except the Lord Major Sir *Richard Gurney, Binion*, and the now Kings Attorney; for the latter of which we are not so wise as to understand his fault, being a high point of new Parliament Priviledge, which his Judges could not by a known Law suddenly finde any punishment for; and for *Binion* let it rest upon the consciences of his Judges, whether he were guilty of the crimes charged by good proof; but this we must say, That we are not satisfied, but that he ought to have been tried by twelve Free-men upon their Oathes, according to the Great Charter of *England*, and not by the Lords, who are not our equals: and for the sentence it selfe we have so just cause of complaint, that if such arbitrary justice proceed, we shall finde little ease by transferring the Star-chamber from one end of *Westminster Hall*, to the Lords House at the
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other ; and it will be much alike to be committed by the Star-chamber to *Carnarvon* Castle, and the Lords House to *Calcheſter* Gaole, and much worſe to be committed during the pleaſure of that Houſe, then the Kings, for we finde him more inclinable to mercy, (though we wonder much how the King loſt a power of pardoning, or ſhewing mercy in any crime whatſoever, that did not concern a particular Subject.) And for the honeſt Lord Major *Gurney*, if you will beleve us (and many of us were preſent at his triall) he might with more honour and juſtice too, have been acquitted then ſentenced, his greateſt fault being his obedience to his King, and true ſervice to the City according to his Oath and Duty of his place. If theſe things be true, it will make us fear ſomebody ſhares with the Serjant at Arms, Meſſengers, and Gaolers in the fees, and that little care is taken of the Subjects Liberty in the mean time. It may be thought theſe things nothing concern us, but beleve it there is more in it then ſo : that which is one Subjects caſe now, may be ours, or our Childrens hereafter; and a bad preſident is many times of great authority, and dangerous conſequence, which we are the more ſenſible of, becauſe we hear ſome ignorant Lawyers of the Houſe of Commons (one of which wears a ſcarlet-hood, which he paid dear for, and was held none of the wiſeſt the beginning of this Parliament) are pickt out to finde preſidents, and juſtifie by Law the legality of ſequeſtring mens eſtates and inheritances, to turn the King out of His Power of making Sheriſſes of Counties, and put that in the people, and by conſequence deduce it to themſelves; nay ſome (whom we bluſh for) have not been aſhamed to put in print a preſident for depoſing a King, and could finde no better then King *Richard* the ſecond, who all the world knows (to the ſcandall of this Nation, was traiterouſly murdered, the whole progreſſe of which Act was a horrid Treason, upon the faireſt relation of any Chronicle.) And therefore we beſeech you blame us not, if we hereby way of exception make mention of them, that they may not hereafter

hereafter be cited to the prejudice of us and our posterity. We crave leave now to lay down truly and plainly (for our condition is such that we must not palliate) the redresse of our grievances by this Parliament. Indeed, we acknowledge a great deal of zeale in the House of Commons in questioning Projectors, Monopolizors, and the like, but it was too hot to continue, for we do not know of one of them to this day punished; Nay *Kilvert* that grand Projector in the 40. s. *per Tonne* excise, so farre from punishment, as our great Masters of the House of Commons were not ashamed to make use of his skill (who is known to be very dextrous to oppress) to have drawn all the poor Vintners of *London* to make Fine and Ransome, and if they have escaped, they may thank their poverty, and not their innocence: how this comes to passe we know not, but this we know, that Alderman *Abel* (*Kilverts* Comrade in that businesse) was a rich man (and the King gives a hint, as if one of the House of Commons (a crying sinne, if it be true) could take money) and whether *Kilvert* or *Abel* made friends there, and so got off (for it is too too evident, that there is notable friending there in causes, both at Committees and in the House) or whether in the examination of that businesse they stumbled upon some Grandee, or others as deep in that Project as they, we cannot tell: but sure we are, they are at liberty, and unpunished, when many of our honest brethren, and free Subjects are kept in Prison for maintaining their rights by Law.

A great ado was made about the Customers for their exacting Customs and Imposts, but the conclusion of that businesse shews plainly the House of Commons aimed meerly to get money; for the Customers purchased their peace of them (which phrase sounds ill in a place of Justice) and now the House of Commons against expresse Law exact the like Customs and Imposts, which they dispose at pleasure, and think an Order of both Houses a dispensation to that *Premunure* in their Act of Parliament, which we fear will scarce
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upon a fair and legall triall excuse : What think you of the Project of sealing Gold and Silver thred and wire (which the poor Artists about *London* so much cried out upon ?) If any body hath been punished for that abuse, it is more then we could ever heare; yet we, and both Houses too know, that great Lord of the House of Peers, and Sir *H. Mildmay* still of the House of Commons, that dipt their fingers deep in it; nay, and though the King gives a gentle reproof for it, we see nothing done thereupon, which makes us beleieve, that it was not altogether pure Justice in Votting out all Monopolists and Projectors, &c. out of the House of Commons, and yet so notorious a one kept in; nay by your leave we can tell you who escaped turning out upon the loan of 50000. l. which was ill news to us, to think that House could be hired with Money; and yet we have wished since, that all the Members of the House had been as able to furnish Money as he; for then peradventure many as wise and as honest, and of as cleer repute in the Common wealth, (though the man is free from exception) which have been voted out without any cause, might peradventure have sate there still, and by their wisdom and moderation (if that be of weight there) prevented many sudden unadvised Votes, which will scarce be for the honour of Parliaments in succeeding ages. And since we are thus unhappily fallen into the House, we must (though by digression) let you know how sensible we are in apprehending the truth of His Majesties Declaration in the undue courses of election of Knights and Burgesses, and as undue in turning out those duly elected, and putting worse in their rooms; and the notable siding and making Parties thereabouts, insomuch as the Committee for Elections, hath got the Nickname of the Committee of Affection, where every one is more for his friend, then the right; and if all the house of Commons be Judges (as they prerend to be) we can charge every one of them with such sollicitation and pre-instruction in causes and engagements to a party, as were enough to turn any other Judge

Judge of *England* out of his place, and forfeit all his estate, and that justly too.

We would be glad to know what was the cause of turning the Lord *Faulkland*, Sir *John Culpepper*, Sir *To. Strangways*, Master *G. Palmer*, and divers others out of the Houses (for they were voted out by scores hand over head) unlesse it were because they spake more reason then the more violent party could answer; and therefore it was come to that passe, that (clean contrary to the use, yea and the honour of Parliaments too) things were not debated by reason and strength of Argument, but by putting it to the question, and carrying it by most voyces, where the greater number were so far from understanding many times the force of Arguments, that they did not after the Vote was past conceive the state or sense of the question, but thought it was enough for them to Vote with Master *Pym*, or Master *Hampden* by an implicate faith, and if they differed (as seldom they did) then crosse or pyle, Vote at adventure: Do not think we are too bold herein, or this is breach of priviledge; for when these things are told abroad (and it were pity they should be concealed, lest they should not be amended.) Blame not us for complaining of them, when we suffer so much by them; and if it be a breach of priviledge, we hope we shall escape as well as Master *Lawrence Whittakers*, the late Clerk of the Councell, for a farre greater, who searcht Master *Hampdens* pockets, and tooke away his papers soon after the breach of the last Parliament, and yet now continued a Member of the House of Commons. Indeed, we heare much complaint touching the breach of Parliament priviledge, principally that touching the Lord *Kimbolton*, and the five Members of the House of Commons, and we so farre dislike the Kings going to the House of Commons, as we take it to be against the priviledge of Parliament, and wish with all our hearts it had been forborn; But after the King hath given so full satisfaction therein, and in plain terms made an acknowledgement thereof (a rare thing

in a Prince) that it should still be mentioned (as if all errors in a King were never to be forgotten) we must needs think there is not that care of preserving the Kings honour, and desire of unity between him and his people, as all honest men wish for, and that the Kings faults are nothing neer so many as are pretended, that this must be so often reiterated to make up a number. And yet by the way we must hint thus much, If that Lord or five Members be guilty of Treason, we shall not stick to convict those five Members, and see them duly executed, according to the old Law; for we never heard that any Parliament man had a priviledge of Parliament in his tryall for Treason till this Parliament, and we mean not to uphold new created priviledges.) Surely, breach of Parliament priviledge is not a sin unpardonable (if it be) it will fare ill with some of both Houses that discovered the difference of opinion by some of the House of Commons by name in the businesse of the late Earle of *Strafford*, and the well-affected Lords in the House of Peeres in the businesse of the Church Liturgie. I and with all the rabble of Brownists and Anabaptists, that with unheard of impudence durst aske the question publicly at the Barre in the House of Commons, Who they were which opposed the well-affected party in that House, (a thing unpresidented) and that more noble person of the House of Commons, that did not stick to ask the like question in the House of Lords (though we charge not that upon his score (blame to them that injoynd him that taske.) Nay, what shall become of the multitude of the zealous Sectaries, and rabble of ignorant people sent to both Houses; but specially to the House of Peers by Captain *Ven* and his wife, and *Isaack Pennington*, to cry Justice, Justice, and, No Bishops, No Bishops, and to terrifie some Lords from the House, and awe others that were there; we can finde no way but a Pardon, or an Act of Oblivion: for we are sure there were never higher breaches of Parliament priviledge then these, nor a greater stain upon
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Parliament proceedings, God grant they rise not up in judgement against us and the Nation. We are loth to rub too hard upon this sore, we know it is a tender place, else we could tell strange things done this Parliament, not onely *ex tempore* Votes, but Bills passe *ex tempore* the same day they were first read, contrary to the gravity and reason of all former times, as if they could as well Vote and make Acts of Parliament by the spirit *ex tempore*, as their Levites can pray and preach, and to say the truth, are much alike, which makes religious and wise men ashamed of both, and is no small cause of our complaint. Let no man think this a businesse of no concernment to us, it is no losse then our losse of Parliaments (whereby we shall lose all our happinesse) if we lose the honour, wisdom, gravity and justice of them; and we must complain till we see amendment, and must crave pardon of our Noble Lords to tell them, That we see (what they know to be true) so much sifting and engaging one another in their Committees in matters of civill justice, that if there were a superiour Court to complain unto of what they have mis-done this Parliament (besides the many delays and protractions of causes) whilst those who should attend to heare and judge, are in bed, or at play, or some worse employment, or idle at the best, our Judges of inferiour Courts (whom we formerly complained of, and not without cause) would be reckoned little gods by way of comparison; and few of their best Orders are worth the charge of attendanc, and Lawyers and Clerks fees. And surely when things are thus carryed, we have cause to speak, but the worst is yet behind, for as (if our Parliament (which was wont to redresse all our grievances) envied our happinesse, and studied our ruine) they have found out a new way to deprive us of our Laws, Liberty, and Property. This may be thought very strange at the first sight, but we shall so plainly demonstrate it, as we doubt not but (the Parliament men themselves being reasonable Judges) it will be assented unto for an undeniable truth; and it will be evident to every ordinary

nary understanding, that under the pretence of defending our Laws and Religion, we are couzened of both. To begin with our Laws (and follow them for the present, though in an ill president, in putting Religion at the fagge end, when other businesse is done) we have got a new Law of Ordinances so called, that hath turned all our Liberties, Property, Petition of right, and all other old known and rightfull Laws out of doors; and if we continue so simple longer to submit to them, the free Subjects of *England* shall be in worse condition then a Turkish slave: whilst they are at the mercy of one, we at the pleasure and command of hundreds, to dispose our lives, liberties, estates, wives and children, yea and our Religion too according to their humours. The first time we found this stealing in upon us, was in the businesse of the *Militia*, which we swallowed without any examination of the legality, being driven into amazement with fears of some sudden and unavoydable danger, and blame us not, if we were apprehensive thereof upon printed relations of so many pretended horrid treacheries against the Parliament, when every day almost produced a discovery of a new treason: That of the Taylors in Moore-fields; the Stable of Horses underground; the Danish Fleet that was discomfited by *Van Trump* along time since, besides other strange discoveries and Letters that came God knows from whence; for the Authors may be ashamed to be known, and such like fictions, that served onely to amaze us, whilst in the mean time we yeilded to that illegall power put in the Lieutenants of the *Militia*, thinking onely thereby to defend our selves from a present force; but we finde now that it is and hath been put in execution to divest our King of his Forts, Towns, Castles, Navies, Goods and Revenues, and to put the strength of the Kingdom in the power and command of poore men of desperate Fortunes or factions, and Schismaticall men addicted to Anabaptisme and Brownisme: Look amongst the *London* Commanders, from *Fowk*, *Normington*, and other the Princes of
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the *Mitilla*, by Colonell *Ven* and *Manning*, as low as Captain *Bradly* and *Basse* (if bankrupting be a badge of poverty) & compare the rest of the Lists, and for one honest able Commander you will find more then twice as many Schismaticall beggarly Sectaries; indeed, some are men of worth, else the cheat had bin too grosse. We confesse we were not so sensible as discretion would have taught us of the taking of *Hull* from the King, & seising his Arms there, and little thought his Declaration was a true prophesie that our turns would be next: We never dreamt, that any under pretext of Religion, or presenting a Petition to our King, would have assaulted his Royall Person, as at *Keinton*, (an act which we disavow to the present age, and all succeeding generations;) we could not have beleevd, if we had not tried it by woful experience, that our horses and goods should have been taken away against our wills by *Isaac Pennington*, or any his officers; that Souldiers should have been billeted in our houses perforce, nay & Martiall Law voted to be put in execution by two Houses of Parliament, and that sitting a Parliament, and whilest other Courts of Justice, Assises, Sessions, and the Courts of Westminster were all open; we wonder where the new offences of Malignants and ill-affected; and men not to be confided in, are to be found in our Law? and what punishment is due to them? And we no lesse wonder how it was possible that Noble Lord (whom we took to be our Patron in defence of our Religion & Laws) was drawn in, or brought on to be general of an Army against our King and to be an instrument of so much mischief to us; & how those brave Lords, *Northumberland*, *Warwick*, *Holland*, *Bedford*, *Salisbury*, *Howard*, and honest *Pembroke*, with some other honest Lords, and the remnant of honest and wise

men left in the House of Commons could be led on all this while, and not discover the misery that was brought upon us and our posterity by this new found Law ? It is too late now to prevent what is past, & it is some comfort to us to hear that they understand, and are sensible of our sufferings and dangers, and endeavour to prevent them ; but unlesse a speedy course be taken, we see our ruine so imminent, that we must fall to put our resolutions in practice : as if all the former grievances were too little (putting in the plundering of houses, and more then barbarous cruelty in the unheard of tortures which the Parliament Forces used to some of our neighbours (old *Best of Canterbury*, and Sir *William Botelers* man of *Kent*, and others for instance of the latter, and his Master, and hundred houses more plundered by them for proof of the former.) There is now another so named Ordinance for taking away the twentieth part of our estates, and provision by additionall so called Ordinances to levie it by distraining our goods, imprisoning our persons, and turning our wives, children and families out of doores, which when we first perused, we concluded with our selves, That either those which made it were not well in their wits, or did beleave all the Subjects of *England* but themselves fools, to suffer it to be put in execution. We are much engaged to our King (as for many other favours) so particularly for that his last Declaration of the eighth of *December*, by way of answer to that pretended Ordinance, and his charge not to obey it. And we finde his good advertisements in other his Declarations too true (we wish we had heeded them better in time) but we must with all humility let him and every one else know, that from the first perusal of that Ordinance we
were

were resolved to oppose it to the death: we found it evident enough, that they might by the like new law take the other nineteenth part of our estates when they pleased, and our lives too. And they of the House of Commons were much mistaken, who thought it a favour to us in sparing our lives in this; for he is a poore spirited man that would chuse to live in a prison, and see his estate taken from him, and his wife and children turned a begging, and banished: And therefore we must now deale roundly for the truth, as others have don for wrong. We would faine know how long it is since the making law by Ordinance was in use, for some of us (as old as since the the beginning of *Queen Elizabeths* time) never knew it till this Parliament. Indeed, we have heard of such things that were of ancient times (and it may be lawfull too) but cannot yet learn by any good Antiquary or Lawyer, that both Houses of Parliament, without the Kings consent, did make an Ordinance to binde the free Subjects of *England* in their lives, liberty, or estates. If an Order of both Houses may make new Law, or abrogate or suspend our old, you may quickly seise upon all our estates, and bestow them amongst your selves and friends; and you have shewn us a good inclination that way, in bestowing 6000. li. upon your Speaker of the House of Commons, and places at command, and no small profit in the Army upon Members of both Houses, their children, kinred, and friends, which for their skil in war might as wel have been spared in the Army: As for Counsell in the House, witnesse those grave & valiant Lords, *Hastings, Rochford, &c.* And we could never learn of any great experience of Martiall valour in my Lord *Say*, or his Son (that had the fleet unruly horse) to draw them so conscienciously to undertake imployments of that nature. But we finde lit-

the conscience made of taking pluralities of Command in the Army (a Regiment of foot, and Troop of horse) and stay at home and take the pay, which comes out of our purses, and complain of lazie Ministers for pluralities of Church livings : We like not the latter, and we do as much condemne the former.

We thought we should have had thanks given to such of us as had been wrought upon to bring in our plate, and lend Money to the Parliament, more then wise men would have done; and that it had been an impossibility that ever the quantity and proportion should have been questioned, and a tax follow. Will our great Lords and others of great estates in both Houses part with the twentieth part (so roundly ?) Our choice it seemes is now as in the beginning, differs onely in this, There lend, or go to prison; Here lend, or take and sell our goods, put our persons in a Gaole, turn wives and children out of doors, and banish them.

What is become of our Petition of right? what use of a Trienniall Parliament? If this last but a few dayes at this rate, we shall have never a Free-holder of 40, s. a yeer left to chuse Knights, nor a free Citizen but in a prison. We wonder that this new kinde of Ordinance was not sooner found out; It would have spared the trouble of getting the Kings assent to many Bills. Why was not *Strafford* killed with an Ordinance? the Bishops discharged out of the Lords House with an Ordinance? and this Parliament made everlasting by an Ordinance? What dull unlearned men were Sir *Edward Coke*, *Phillips*, *Ellyot*, *Digs*, *Sands*, &c. that could never finde or devise this knack of forging new Laws in former Parliaments?

The rule you make is, That an Order of both Houses

Houses, which you mis-call an Ordinance, binds us during the Parliament. If you had but made, or do yet make such an Order, this Parliament can never dissolve, and we must re-call our thanks for our Trienniall Bill, for we shall be made incapable of taking fruit by it. Seeing you are pleased to proceed thus farre, we besetch you make one Ordinance more, That both Houses shall be a Corporation, to take Lands and goods to them and their Successors, and that they shall be the onely Projectors of all the Lands and goods in the Kingdom, and when any of that Corporation dyes, *toties quoties*, the Survivor & none else shall choose a Successor to perpetuity. And if this be binding to the Subjects (as it must be if your rules hold) we have spun a fair thred in sending Knights and Burgeesses to this Parliament. Indeed you have dealt gently with us (in comparifon) in taking but the Twentieth part, having stopt all the Kings, Queens, and Princes Revenues, and left them to live upon Alms (which all men cry shame of) and we beleeeve will not be well taken by our brethren of *Wales*, that you should so use their Prince; how bold soever you make with our King; truly, we finde as specious Preambles to these new Ordinances to ruine us, as to any former Projects and Monopolies, which makes us think some of the Kings Counsell at Law are gotten into the House of Commons, and underhand, for conscience sake, betray both us and their Master; and we feare ere long if these courses hold, *Isaac Pennington* shall have a Monopoly of high-way passes at 2 s. *per Pell*, established by Ordinance for the good of the people, which hee now exacts without comptroll.

We beseech you to think us not so void of reason, to

be thus deluded, if Serjant *Wilde*, or the more learned Ma-
 tier *Glin* avouch it for Law, we shall no more beleieve it
 upon their words, then we did his Countrey-man Judge
Jones, in his opinion of Ship-money : And never pretend
 to us that in cases of necessity you may do what you list,
 when you pretend Liberty to declare a necessity when
 you please, That were to make us in far worse condition
 then the Ship-money businesse, we shall finde too many
 in both Houses full of necessities : And therefore we be-
 seech you to consider seriously, into what desperate exi-
 gencies we are driven, and if we finde not speedy relief,
 we must take up some of your own principles for prose-
 cuting our Resolutions in defending our selves, in cases of
 urgent and unavoidable necessity : Nay, and it is high
 time to do it presently, if you have sent for an Army of
Scots, (as we heare you have) to make us a Conquered
 People.

We should weary out a patient Reader, to tell all our
 distresses, and how the businesse of *Ireland* hath been car-
 ryed, and trenched too much upon the honour of those
 Houses which we shall study to preserve : We forbear
 therefore further enumeration in our civill calamities, as
 unpleasing to our thoughts; and in a word or two tel you,
 how it hath fared with us in our Religion and Church-
 government, God be blessed our Papists and Jesuits
 pull in their heads, and good care is taken for keeping
 them under, but we wish it might be done according to
 the Laws (which are strict enough, if well executed) and
 not by plundering and torturing; for if the Law be not
 the Rule, we, as well as they shall come under the slavery
 of Arbitrary Government. And to speak truth, Preach-
 ing is much advanced; but what we get one way, we lose
 twice

twice as much another: for one Papist before, two seditious Sectaries and Schismatiques now, we would not be mistaken in our expression by (*Sectaries*) and (*Schismatiques*) we mean not religious and godly men or women, who make conscience of sanctifying the Sabbath, frequenting Gods Ordinances of praying and preaching, observing Family-duties of praying and instructing their Families in the principles of Religion, abstaining from all sinne themselves to their power, and for conscience sake friendly and charitably reprovng others that do offend, and in short, make conscience of every sinne, as it is an offence against God; No, God forbid we should harbour such a thought in us, we honour such, and pray God encrease the number; and whether they be nick-named *Puritanes*, or loose *Protestants*, or any other new names of scorn, it matters not, we are contented to share with them in their disdain; I take part with those pious and learned men, *Usher*, *Moreton*, *Brownrigge*, *Westfield*, though Bishops; *Holdsworth*, *Shute*, & others, though in Prison, or suspected for men Popishly affected, or Neutralists; But we intend such as pretend to purity without honesty, that inveigh against swearing, and practise lying, cozening, and deceiving; that cannot endure Episcopall Government, or our Book of Common Prayer, though farre better then any they can frame themselves; That would have no Government in the Church, but all to be independent; That preach, practise, and maintain sedition, rising in Arms against the King, Gods anointed, yea, deposing and killing Kings, (that are not such as they would have them) That take more offence at a harmlesse Ceremony, then at zealous incontinency: These are those that we inveigh against, that are come like the plague of flies,

flies, lice, and caterpillars amongst us, and are countenanced by no mean ones in both Houses; that stick not to affirm, we have had no Reformation in *England* hitherto; and so make our Religion (in which we resolve to live and dye) either nothing, or hereticall, and by their impudence, cunning hypocrisie, and seeming holinesse (deprested with deserved poverty) and hoping to catch good fish in troubled waters, disquiet our Church, and raise and foment discord in the State, and yet are suffered to passe unpunished: Nay, the Laws against them in vilifying and disgracing our Church-Liturgie totally suspended. It may peradventure not be beleevd that such a thing should be, but beleevd us, a new Ordinance will do strange things in Church and Common-wealth. Nay, we expect ere long to be told, that an Order of the House of Commons will be an Ordinance too, at least binde us by, or as a Law; for it hath been put in practice already to stay proceedings in Courts of Justice, and free a Felon out of Prison without triall, and lest you thinke we coyn iuntruths (as fast as some others) you shall finde by their Journall, where they stayed all men from proceeding against Sir *Thomas Dawes*, and discharged one committed by the Lord Chiefe Justice *Bramston* to Newgate for Felony, in stealing the Countesse of *Rivers* goods. And we cannot forget the Order under the *Teste* of M. *Pym*, two yeers since, for taking the Railes from the Communion-Table, when the House of Commons it seemes had delegated their power to him (as they have done since to a close Committee of safety, a course unheard of in former times, and not more absurd then illegall and unjustifiable.) But we are told we shall have a Synod called, and a Bill passed for it, and all things shall be setled in the Church;

Church; God grant we may live to see it, for we must tell you, That we heard the Houses of Parliament intend to choose the Men for the Synod (which is a device as new as the Ordinance) and that the greater number of them are those who oppose Episcopacy, and our Book of Common Prayer, which if true, we must let you know, We hold them not fit men for such a businesse; and they may spare their pains till we would have Religion, and Church-Government unsetled, which hath been their work hitherto; and we must in Justice require a Synod, such as was known to former ages, and that we may not blush to own when occasion requires. This certainly should have been the first work, we pray it may be well settled at last. But we fear instead of Reformation we shall have some idle head or other will be framing an Answer in writing to our Complaints, which we must tell you will give us no satisfaction; Or we shall have a new Declaration, or Remonstrance, stuf with an old Story of too often-repeated miscarriages (for when any your Ordinances that invade our Rights are to be put upon us, we never misse some such thing to accompany them, and gull us) we must tell you, It is no ease to us to be told in fine words, We shall be disabused; we desire you will begin seriously to Act, and leave writing, for we finde upon all your writings, you have still gone by the worst, which makes us beleve you have not the better cause, but truth is against you, having the advantage of so many able men to pen, and an inclination on your parts to conceive the best of what you set forth, and prejudicacy to what is written in opposition. We therefore humbly and heartily desire both Houses to declare themselves for the maintaining the Booke of Common Prayer establis

shed by Law ; submitting the correcting, qualifying, or altering such things, and indifferent Ceremonies, as to a Synod lawfully called shall be thought fit, and may justly give offence to weak consciences, that Laws may be made and executed against all Schismatiques, Heretiques, and Separatists; and these already made, executed against Papists. That Armies may be disbanded, peace established : The Scots (if sent for) discharged; & our King denyed nothing that is his by the known Law of the Land, but restored to all, and be such a glorious Prince as you promised him. That the new Law by Ordinance, *i. e.* by Order of either or both Houses may be abolished and damned, as was that of Ship-money, and let us heare no more of a Legislative power, but where King, Lords, and Commons concur (for we will no more submit to it then to a new Law by Proclamation) and we require that we may be suffered to enjoy our Lives, Liberties, and Property, according to our Petition of Right, & known Laws, and suffered to try our Rights without Parliament Injunctions. That these things may be done suddenly, and this Parliament dissolved, that so we may have liberty to proceed at Law against the severall Members of both Houses, who make use of their Priviledge, to hinder the proceedings of Justice, and owe us many thousand pounds, and that we may have some fruit of the Triennial Bill. If these things may not be obtained unlesse without breach of priviledge, we may have the names of the first Projectors of these new Ordinances, and such as labour to uphold them. We must let you know, our Resolution is to re-assume the power we put into you (for we told you before, we must work upon your own principles) for you having mainly broken the trust we reposed in

in you, in subverting all our Laws, (which you should have preserved) we may take back what we gave you, (and we are certain, your elections are more conditionall upon that point then our Kings Crown, which comes by Inheritance and Succession;) And we are sure, we have as wise, religious, and honest men left behinde, as we sent to the Parliament. And in case of urgent necessity (which is our case directly) our Laws being overturned, our estates and liberty lost, our wives and children threatned to be turned out of doores, and banisht, and our Religion endangered, we may defend our selves by Arms, and make use of what is next, and we have a president shewn by your selves for the manner of that defence: And shall not be ashamed or afraid to adventure our estates and lives for defence of our known Laws, and true Protestant Religion, and not die slaves more to the name of a Parliament, then to any Tyrant.

we have published this before we could understand the Resolution of other Counties; the times requiring it, and could not expect their Answer; If they approve it, and joyn in it, we desire them to declare so much publicquely, and to do as we intend to do, namely, Totally oppose all new Ordinances, and maintain our Rights by our old and known Laws, assisting each other with Life and Fortune in this our Resolution, for Gods glory, our Countreys good, and our own Freedom.

F I N I S.